

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTO 01340 140047Z
ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
/063 W

-----094721 140052Z /63

R 102045Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3841
INFO AMEMBASSY PRT AU PRINCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTO DOMINGO 1340

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, PMIL, DR, SHUM
SUBJECT: ARMED FORCES SECRETARY REITERATES MILITARY WILL NOT
INTERVENE IN ELECTORAL PROCESS

1. MARCH 10, ARMED FORCES SECRETARY LT. GEN. JUAN RENE BEAUCHAMP
JAVIER REITERATED HIS EARLIER PUBLIC PLEDGE THAT ARMED FORCE
WOULD RESPECT RESULTS OF MAY 16 ELECTION AND WOULD USE
NEITHER PRESSURE NOR COERCION TO AFFECT ELECTORAL PROCESS.
HE SAID FURTHER THAT THOSE MILITARY WHO DO PARTICIPATE IN
POLITICAL ACTIVITIES WOULD BE DISMISSED, AND THOSE WHO COMMIT
EXCESSES WOULD BE BROUGHT BEFORE MILITARY TRIBUNALS.

2. IN REMARKS MADE IN RESPONSE TO REPORTERS' QUESTIONS AT
PUBLIC CEREMONY BEAUCHAMP ALSO SAID ARMED FORCES WOULD GIVE FULL
SUPPORT TO ANY TYPE OF GOVERNMENT WHICH PRESIDENT BALAGUER CHOOSES
TO FORM SHOULD HE BE REELECTED. LATTER COMMENT RESPONDED TO
QUESTION WHETHER MILITARY WOULD SUPPORT A BALAGUER GOVERNMENT
WHICH SOUGHT GREAT CHANGES IN DEALING WITH FOREIGN COMPANIES
AND IN LAND REFORM.

3. BEAUCHAMP HAS SAID ON SEVERAL RECENT OCCASIONS
THAT MILITARY POLITICAL ACTIVITY, PROHIBITED BY
CONSTITUTION, WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. MEANWHILE,
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NATIONAL POLICE CHIEF MAJ. GENERAL NEIT NIVAR
ANNOUNCED MARCH 8 THAT SPECIAL COMMISSIONS OF BOTH
POLICE AND ARMED FORCES HAVE BEEN FORMED TO INSTRUCT
MEMBERS OF BOTH INSTITUTIONS AS TO PROPER CONDUCT DURING
ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN.

4. AT SAME TIME BOTH NIVAR AND BEAUCHAMP HAVE RESPONDED

TO CHARGES THAT THEY THEMSELVES HAVE PARTICIPATED IN PRO-BALAGUER ACTIVITIES. NIVAR, ON FEBRUARY 27, ISSUED DENIAL HE HAD PARTICIPATED IN REFORMIST PARTY CARAVAN AS WAS REPORTED IN PRESS. ALSO, BEAUCHAMP IN HIS MARCH 10 STATEMENTS, DENIED THAT HE HAD ATTENDED SIMILAR REFORMISTA GATHERING IN SANTIAGO.

5. WHILE MILITARY/POLICE REITERATED FEALTY TO CONSTITUTION, MAJOR OPPOSITION DOMINICAN REVOLUTIONARY PARTY (PRD) RUNS HOT AND COLD IN TREATMENT OF INCREASINGLY DELICATE THEME OF POSSIBLE MILITARY INTERFERENCE IN ELECTION PROCESS. FOR EXAMPLE, PRD SECRETARY GENERAL JOSE FRANCISCO PENA GOMEZ, WHO HAS STUMBLER ON OCCASION INTO CONFRONTATIONS WITH MILITARY, SAID IN A MARCH 2 RADIO BROADCAST THAT ONLY WAY BALAGUER COULD BE REELECTED WAS BY "DIRECT INTERVENTION" OF ARMED FORCES. TWO DAYS LATER, AFTER IT BECAME APPARENT REMARK HAD TOUCHED SENSITIVE GANGLIA, PENA WAS EXPRESSING CONFIDENCE IN "GOOD" JUDGMENT, PATRIOTISM, AND DEMOCRATIC VOCATION" OF ARMED FORCES.

6. PRD PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE ANTONIO GUZMAN HAS ALSO EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE IN MILITARY RECENTLY. ON MARCH 4 GUZMAN CALLED "VERY COMMENDABLE" INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED BY NIVAR IN LATE FEBRUARY THAT POLICEMEN WOULD ABSTAIN FROM PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL CARAVANS, SUCH AS ONE SPONSORED BY THE PRO-BALAGUER CRUZADA DE AMOR IN WHICH CONFIDENTIAL

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POLICE MINGLED FREEDLY WITH MARCHERS. ON MARCH 4, SEEMING TO CORRECT PENA'S INITIAL GAFFE, GUZMAN SAID, "THE ARMED FORCES WILL RESPECT THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE BECAUSE THEY HAVE SAID SO ON DIFFERENT OCCASIONS THROUGH THEIR SECRETARY, LT. GEN. BEAUCHAMP JAVIER."

7. COMMENT: IT APPEARS BOTH MILITARY AND OPPOSITION PRD ARE PLAYING CAT AND MOUSE GAME OVER THEME OF MILITARY INTERVENTIONISM. AFTER TWELVE YEARS UNDER BALAGUER, AS PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, MILITARY HAVE DEEP PERSONAL TIES AND LOYALTY TO PRESIDENT. IT IS NO SECRET THEY FAVOR HIS REELCTION, AND IT IS WIDELY REPORTED THAT THEY ACTIVELY WORK FOR IT BEHIND SCENES. ON OTHER HAND, PRD, WHICH IS AWARE OF THIS REALITY, CONTINUOUSLY RAISES ISSUE AS WAY OF PRE-EMPTING OPEN INTEFERENCE BY MILITARY IN ELECTIONS. POSITIVE ASPECT WHICH IS EMERGING IS WIDE CONSENSUS THAT WHETHER MILITARY INTERFERES OR NOT, SUCH POLITICKING IS NOT LEGITIMATE AND SHOULD BE SANCTIONED. AT SAME TIME, CURRENT ARMED FORCES ATTITUDES ON NON-INTERFERENCE REFLECT CONFIDENCE THAT BALAGUER WILL BE REELECTED.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ARMED FORCES, POLITICAL MILITARY RELATIONS, PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 10 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SANTO01340
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780112-0223
Format: TEL
From: SANTO DOMINGO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780382/aaaacrhp.tel
Line Count: 115
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 129dacc9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 jul 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3371897
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ARMED FORCES SECRETARY REITERATES MILITARY WILL NOT INTERVENE IN ELECTORAL PROCESS
TAGS: PINT, MILI, SHUM, DR
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/129dacc9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014